



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
CALIFORNIA DIVISION
980 Ninth Street, Suite 400
Sacramento, CA. 95814-2724

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Mr. Jeff Morales, Director
CALTRANS, 1120 N Street
Sacramento, California 95814

Attention: Federal Resources Branch, Room 3500
For Rambabu Bavirisetty, Federal Programming (MS 82)

Dear Mr. Morales:

**SUBJECT: 2000/01 FSTIP AMENDMENT NO. 2. AND ADMINISTRATIVE
AMENDMENT NO. 2.1- KINGS COUNTY**

We have completed our review of Amendment 2 and Administrative Amendment 2.1 to the Kings County portion of the 2000/01 to 2002/03 Federal Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (FSTIP). These FSTIP modifications were submitted with your letter dated March 30, 2001. Kings County is within the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin but is located outside the designated boundaries of the metropolitan planning organizations within the San Joaquin Valley.

Our review of the amendments indicates that the project data for the proposed program modifications have not been entered into the California Transportation Improvement Program System (CTIPS) database. Our approval of the State's FY 2000/01 to 2002/03 FSTIP on October 6, 2000, noted the importance of the California Department of Transportation continuing to work with the transportation planning agencies to ensure that CTIPS reflect complete and accurate data on programmed projects. We continue to believe that CTIPS, when used properly, offers a practical and effective programming tool for streamlining the programming process and enhancing the development and dissemination of program information. We recognize that unusual circumstances may occasionally arise that prohibit the entry of program data into the CTIPS database prior to the FSTIP modification request, however, we would expect the processing of amendments under these circumstances to be the exception rather than the rule. We encourage you to share our concerns regarding the lack of project information in CTIPS for these FSTIP amendments with the Kings County Association of Governments. To minimize delays in the FSTIP Amendment approval process in those instances where the project data has not been entered into CTIPS, we encourage both Caltrans and the responsible regional planning agency to describe, in the request for the approval of the amendment, the circumstances that have prohibited the project data entry into the CTIPS database.

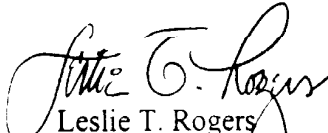
Administrative Amendment 2.1 changes the lead agency for a previously programmed railroad upgrade project of the Coalinga Branchline between Visalia and Huron. The new lead agency for the project is the Cross Valley Rail Joint Powers Authority. Amendment 2 adds a transit fleet expansion project to be administered by the Kings County Area Public Transit Agency and

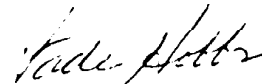
includes the purchase of thirty-eight new 15-passenger vans and four transit buses. This added project is partially funded with congressionally directed funding from the Federal Transit Administration's "Job Access and Reverse Commute" program.

This letter constitutes joint Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration approval for the inclusion of FSTIP Amendment 2 and Administrative Amendment 2.1 into California's 2000/01 FSTIP. We accept this amendment in accordance with statewide planning and programming regulation provisions in 23 CFR 450. We find that these amendments were developed through a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive transportation planning process in accord with statutory statewide planning provisions of 23 U.S.C. 135. Although Kings County is currently in air-quality nonattainment status for the pollutants Ozone and PM10, we find that these program modifications are exempt from the requirement that conformity be determined pursuant to the provisions of 40 CFR 93.126 (Table 2 - Exempt Projects). In addition, we have determined that these FSTIP Amendments do not adversely impact the FSTIP Financial Plan.

This finding has been coordinated with the California Division office of the Federal Highway Administration and the Region IX office of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Sincerely,


Leslie T. Rogers
Regional Administrator
Federal Transit Administration


Michael G. Ritchie
Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration

cc:

Kings County TIP Binder
COFCG

Caltrans:

Federal Resources Branch, Dick Petrie
HQ Transportation Programming, Greg Wong
Office of Local Programs, Terry Abbott